

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for protecting an entity from the effects of fire caused by an explosion comprising covering at least a part of said entity in a barrier comprising a water gel wherein the barrier comprises multiple water gel layers in which the concentration of the gel increases from outside water gel layer to the inner water gel layer.

2. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said method involves preventing fires starting in the aftermath of an explosion.

3. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said water gel comprises water and a gel selected from gelatin, gellan gum gels, poly(gamma-benzyl-L-glutamate) (PBLG), agar, collagen, protein gels, polysaccharide gels, keratin gels, hydrogels, ormosils, sol-gels, hydrophilic polymer gels, glycoprotein gels, carrageenans, pectins, alginates, seed gums, egg protein g and Gelacrimide gels or mixtures thereof.

4. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 3 wherein said gel is gelatin.

5. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 4 wherein the concentration of gel in water is in the range 5 to 40 wt%.

6. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 5 wherein the concentration of gel in water is in the range 5 to 15 wt%.

7.-8. (Canceled).

9.(Currently Amended) A method as claimed in ~~any one of~~ claim 1 wherein said barrier comprises in addition to the[[a]] water gel layer ~~[[and a]]~~at least one layer of a metal, a polymer layer, a fabric layer, a fibreglass layer, a ceramic layer or dilatant layer or mixtures of such

layers.

10. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in any one of claim 1 wherein said entity is a structure, organism or the physical environment.

11. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 10 wherein said structure or organism is a building, vehicle or human.

12. (Canceled).

13. (Currently Amended) A method for protecting an entity from the effects of fire comprising covering at least a part of said entity in a barrier comprising a water and gelatin wherein the barrier comprises multiple water gelatin layer in which the concentration of the gelatin increases from the outside layer to the inner layer.

14. (Currently Amended) A fire-retardant material comprising gelatin and water, wherein the barrier comprises multiple water gelatin layers in which the concentration of the gelatin increases from the outside layer to the inner layer and wherein the concentration of gelatin is at least 3% w/w in said outside layer.

15. (Currently Amended) A fire-retardant material as claimed in claim 14 ~~comprising in~~ addition to the gelatin and water layer ~~[[and a]]~~ at least one layer of a metal, a polymer layer, a fabric, a fibreglass layer, a ceramic layer or a dilatant layer or mixtures of such layers.

16. (Original) A fire-retardant material as claimed in claim 15 comprising a gelatin and water layer and a cotton layer.

17. (Original) A fire-retardant material as claimed in claim 16 comprising a metal layer.